



15 December 2021

Statistics on waste managed by local authorities in England in 2020/21

This release relates to the collection and management of waste under the possession or control of local authorities in England. It covers three principal measures as summarised in the table below.

The next update to this National statistics notice and accompanying datasets is scheduled to be in November/December 2022.

What data is confirmed in this release?

| Measure | Time Period |
|--|---|
| Waste from households This is the official recycling measure that is used as the basis for reporting at a harmonised UK level. | First publication of figures for the 2020 calendar year and for the 2020/21 financial year. |
| Local authority collected waste This is all waste within the remit of local authorities. It includes household waste plus other non-household waste collected by local authorities. | First publication of figures for the 2020/21 financial year. |
| Household waste This is broader than 'waste from households', and includes waste from street bins, street sweepings, and parks and grounds. It does not include metals from incinerator bottom ash. | First publication of figures for the 2020/21 financial year. |

For more information about what data is included in the three measures listed in the table above, please refer to the section on 'Glossary of terms and measures' and the separate [methodology document](#). A reference [document](#) giving an explanation of what recycling is and comparing measures across England, Wales, Scotland and N Ireland is available [here](#).

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An National Statistics publication. These statistics have been produced to the high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, which sets out eight principles including meeting user needs, impartiality and objectivity, integrity, sound methods, and assured quality, frankness and accessibility. More information on the Official Statistics Code of Practice can be found [here](#).

Key points

England Waste from Households: 2020 and 2020/21 (Table 1 and Figure 1)

- The official England 'waste from households' recycling rate was 44.0 per cent in 2020, down 1.5 percentage points from 45.5 per cent in 2019.
- Metal recovered and then recycled from waste that has been through incineration (IBA metal) added approximately 1.0 percentage points to the recycling rate in 2020, compared to 0.9 percentage points in 2019.
- In 2020, total 'waste from households' increased to 22.6 million tonnes from 2019 when it was 22.1 million tonnes. This is equivalent to 399 kg per person, up from 392 kg per person in 2019, an increase of 1.8 per cent.
- The amount of residual waste treated was 12.6 million tonnes, up from 12.0 million tonnes in 2019, an increase of 5.1 per cent.
- The total amount of waste recycled decreased. In 2020, it was 9.9 million tonnes, down from 10.1 million tonnes in 2019. This was a decrease of 1.2 per cent.
- The amount of dry material recycled in 2020 was 5.9 million tonnes down very slightly (by 7 thousand tonnes) on 2019.
- The tonnage of separately collected food waste sent for recycling was 485 thousand tonnes, an increase of 11.0 per cent from 437 thousand tonnes in 2019.
- 'Other organic' waste sent for recycling was 3.6 million tonnes, a decrease of 164 thousand tonnes or 4.4 per cent on 2019.
- The rolling 12-month 'waste from households' recycling rate was 43.8% at the end of March 2021. This is a decrease of 1.7 percentage points compared with the previous 12-month period. These figures include IBA metal.

England Local Authority and Household Waste: 2020/21 financial year (Table 3)

- In 2020/21, total local authority managed waste increased by 1.3 per cent to 25.9 million tonnes.
- 7.8 per cent of all local authority waste (2.0 million tonnes) was disposed of via landfill in 2020/21. This was down 0.2 million tonnes (7.1 per cent) from 2019/20.
- Waste sent for incineration increased by 0.8 million tonnes (7.7 per cent) to 12.5 million tonnes in 2020/21 compared to 2019/20. It was the disposal method used for 48.2 per cent of all local authority waste.
- There are no changes to definitions or methodology for all local authority and 'household waste' recycling figures; IBA metal is not included.

- 10.7 million tonnes of local authority waste was sent for recycling in 2020/21, a decrease of 0.2 million tonnes (2.2 per cent) on 2019/20.
- Amongst the 338 local authorities in England, there is considerable variation in 'household waste' recycling rates, ranging from 18 to 64 per cent in 2020/21.

Datasets for the national and regional data, as well as data at local authority level—including the ex-National Indicator measures—are available at the gov.uk [website](#).

Data Revisions

There are no revisions to historic data presented in this notice.

Recycling Explainer

A [document](#) giving an explanation of what can be counted as recycling, different national recycling measures and summarising how measures across England, Wales, Scotland and N Ireland differ is available.

Give us feedback on this notice

To help us understand your information and data needs, please complete the [short survey](#) consisting of 4 questions. (This link opens in google forms).

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1 Coronavirus (COVID-19): The impact of the pandemic on local authority waste collection and services.

The figures shown in this publication cover the period from April 2020 to March 2021. The first national lockdown of the COVID-19 pandemic commenced in March 2020 and local authority waste collection services were heavily disrupted during April to June 2020.

Some local authorities were unable to maintain collections of dry recyclate, some garden waste collections were suspended and there was widespread closure of household waste recycling centres (HWRC). This disruption was due to staff shortages and the introduction of changes to working practice. The national lockdown and rules for the operation of some commercial enterprises had a significant impact on the generation of waste during this period.

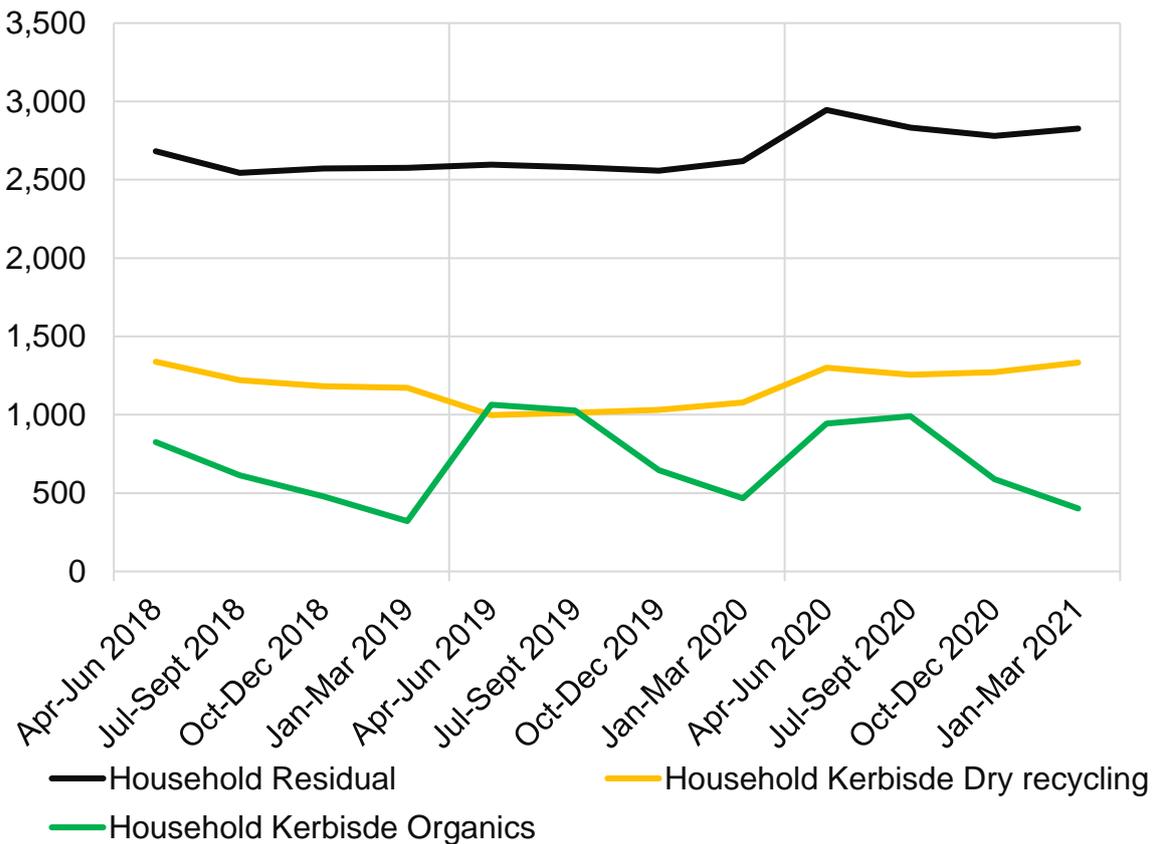
Lockdown restrictions eased through the summer and into the autumn of 2020. Local authorities and businesses acclimatised to working under lockdown and the COVID-19 pandemic, and as a result there was less disruption to waste collection operations during the remainder of 2020. Notably the second national lockdown commencing in November 2020 had less of an impact on waste and recycling tonnages reported in these statistics.

The tables and charts below show quarterly collection tonnages for selected waste streams. They do not include the tonnages of all waste sources and will not sum to the overall tonnages in the other sections of this statistical notice and datasets.

1.1 The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown on household waste arisings collected at the kerbside

Figure 1: Quarterly kerbside collections from Household by waste stream April 2018 to March 2021

Thousand tonnes

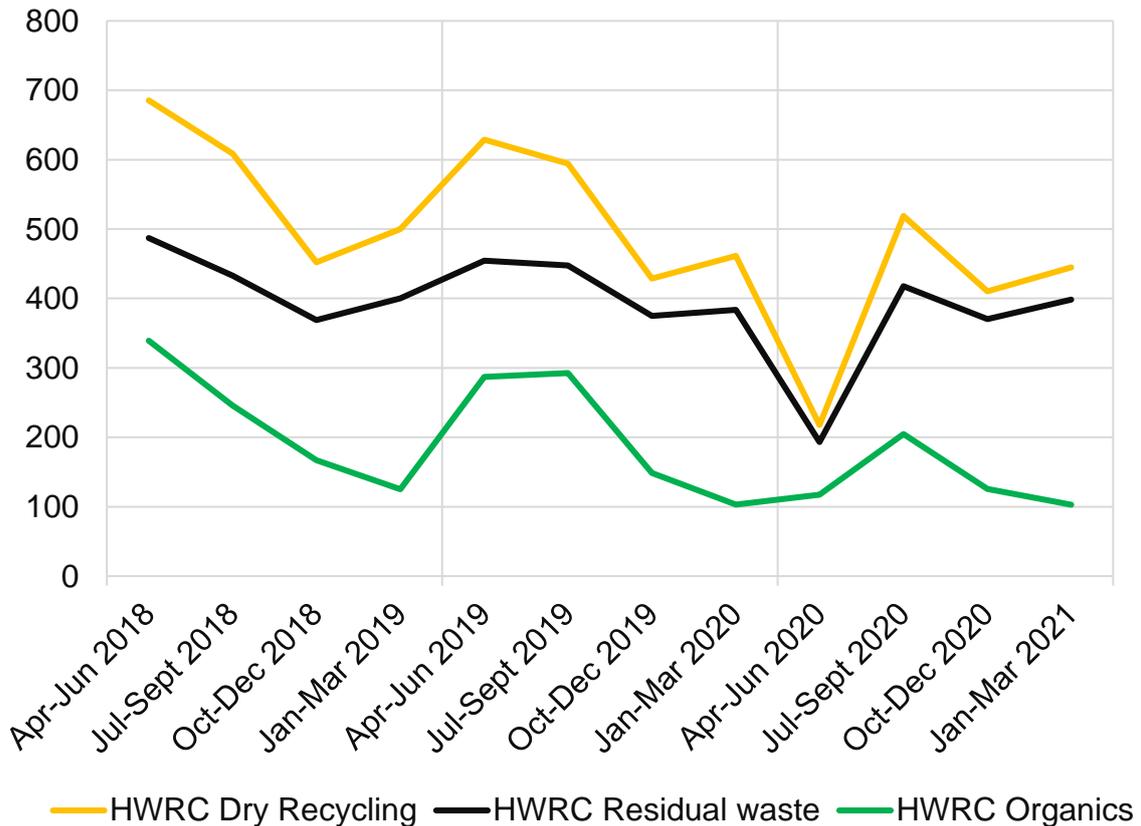


- The national lockdown resulted in increased levels of household waste arisings in 2020/21.
- Figure 1 above shows large increases in the quantity of waste collected kerbside from households. Residual waste increased by 10 per cent in 2020/21 compared to 2019/20, and dry recycling increased by 25 per cent. Organics collected kerbside from households were lower across the year (down 9 per cent) with some authorities reporting disruption to organic waste collection services. It should also be noted that tonnages of organics can vary considerably from year to year according to climatic conditions affecting plant growth.

1.2 The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown on Household waste collected at the kerbside

Figure 2: Quarterly tonnages of Household waste deposited at HWRC during April 2018 to March 2021

Thousand tonnes



- Figure 2 shows the impact of widespread HWRC closures during April to June 2020, which was the first period of national lockdown. HWRC residual waste fell by 58 per cent compared to April to June 2019, dry recycling by 65 per cent and organics fell by 59 per cent.
- Limited reopening of HWRC during the summer saw tonnages partially recover during July to September 2020. Residual waste was down 7 per cent compared to July to September 2019, dry recycling was down 13 per cent and organics down 30 per cent.
- Despite continuing disruption to HWRC between October 2020 and March 2021, tonnages reported for the 6 months showed a continuing increase to return to near the levels reported for October 2019 to March 2020.

- In 2020/21, as a whole HWRC Household residual waste decreased by 17 per cent compared to 2019/20, while HWRC Dry recycling and organics decreased by 25 per cent and 34 per cent respectively.
- Recycling collected at HWRC makes a significant contribution to overall recycling tonnages from households. As a proportion of household recycling collected from kerbside or HWRC, organics at HWRC accounted 9 per cent of the tonnage 2019/20 and dry recycling 21 per cent. In 2020/21 the HWRC contribution of organics fell to 5 per cent and dry recycling to 16 per cent.
- Overall in 2020/21 the tonnage of dry recyclate and organics collected kerbside from households or deposited at HWRC decreased by only 0.4% compared 2019/20.
- In 2020/21 the tonnage of residual household waste collected kerbside or deposited at HWRC increased by 6.3% compared to 2019/20.

Figure 3: Other residual waste streams collection tonnages April 2018 to March 2021

Thousand tonnes

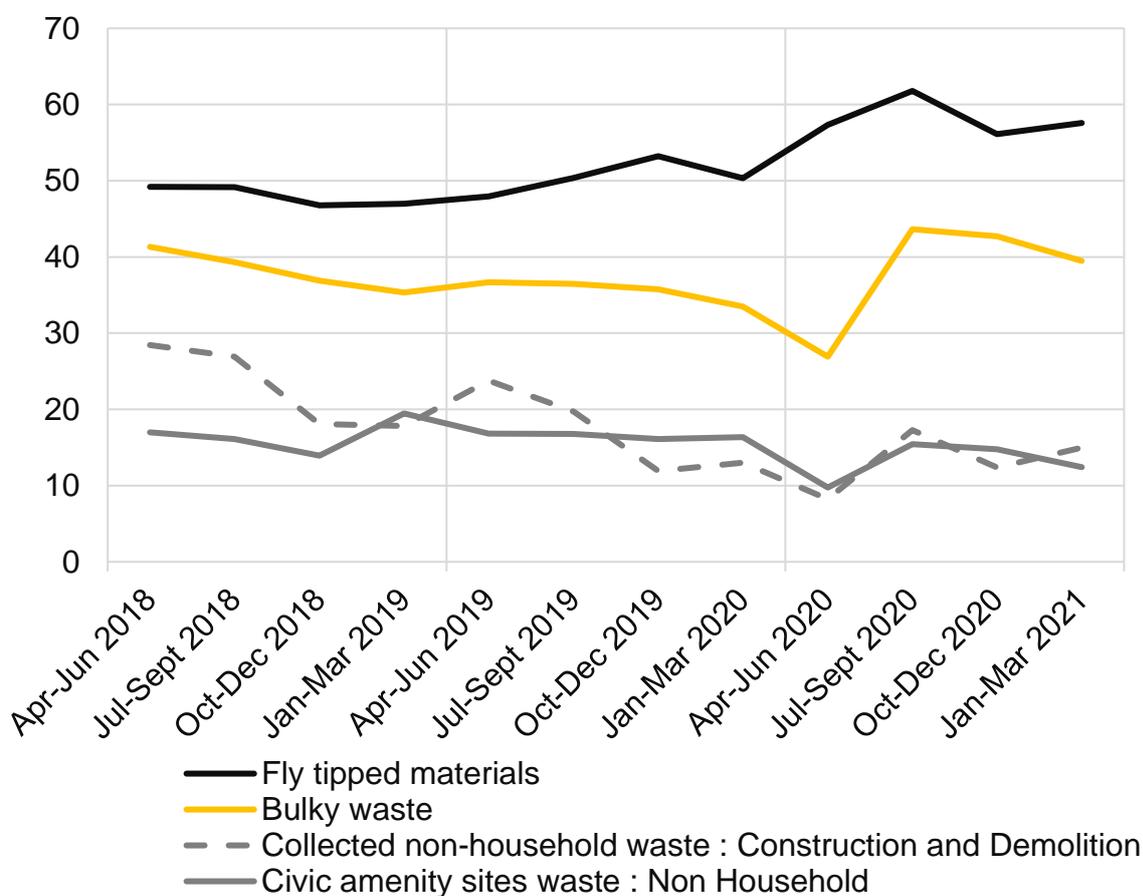


Figure 3 shows other significant residual waste stream types reported by Local authorities.

- Bulky waste collected from households decreased by 6.9 per cent in April to June 2020 compared to April to June 2019, this was due to COVID-19 affecting local authority services. Tonnages of bulky waste collected from households during July 2020 to March 2021 were higher than in earlier years, and overall increased by 7.3 per cent in 2020/21 compared to 2019/20.
- Tonnages of Fly-tipped waste were higher in each quarter of 2020/21 compared to previous years. The highest tonnage reported was in July to September 2020.

2 Waste from households

2.1 Waste from Households (Table 1)

'Waste from households' is the measure introduced by the UK in 2014 to provide a harmonised UK indicator for reporting recycling rates at a UK level. It excludes local authority collected waste not considered to have come directly from households, such as street bins, street sweepings, parks and grounds waste, and compost-like output.

For more information, refer to the [Data and Methodology](#) section of this notice.

Table 1: Composition breakdown and recycling rate of 'waste from households' in England, 2016 to 2020, (thousand tonnes)

| Waste type | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | % change 2020 over 2019 |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| Total Recycling (a) of which: | 10,217 | 10,139 | 9,840 | 10,054 | 9,931 | -1.2% |
| Dry recycling of which: | 6,042 | 5,917 | 5,866 | 5,874 | 5,867 | -0.1% |
| IBA Metal | 143 | 181 | 187 | 201 | 222 | 10.6% |
| Separately collected food waste | 355 | 386 | 414 | 437 | 485 | 11.0% |
| Other organics recycling | 3,820 | 3,836 | 3,561 | 3,743 | 3,579 | -4.4% |
| Total Residual | 12,535 | 12,266 | 12,151 | 11,967 | 12,574 | 5.1% |
| Total waste from households (b) | 22,770 | 22,437 | 22,033 | 22,074 | 22,586 | 2.3% |
| Waste from households recycling rate (including IBA metal) | 44.9% | 45.2% | 44.7% | 45.5% | 44.0% | -1.5 percentage points |
| Waste from households recycling rate (excluding IBA metal) | 44.2% | 44.4% | 43.8% | 44.6% | 43.0% | -1.6 percentage points |

Notes

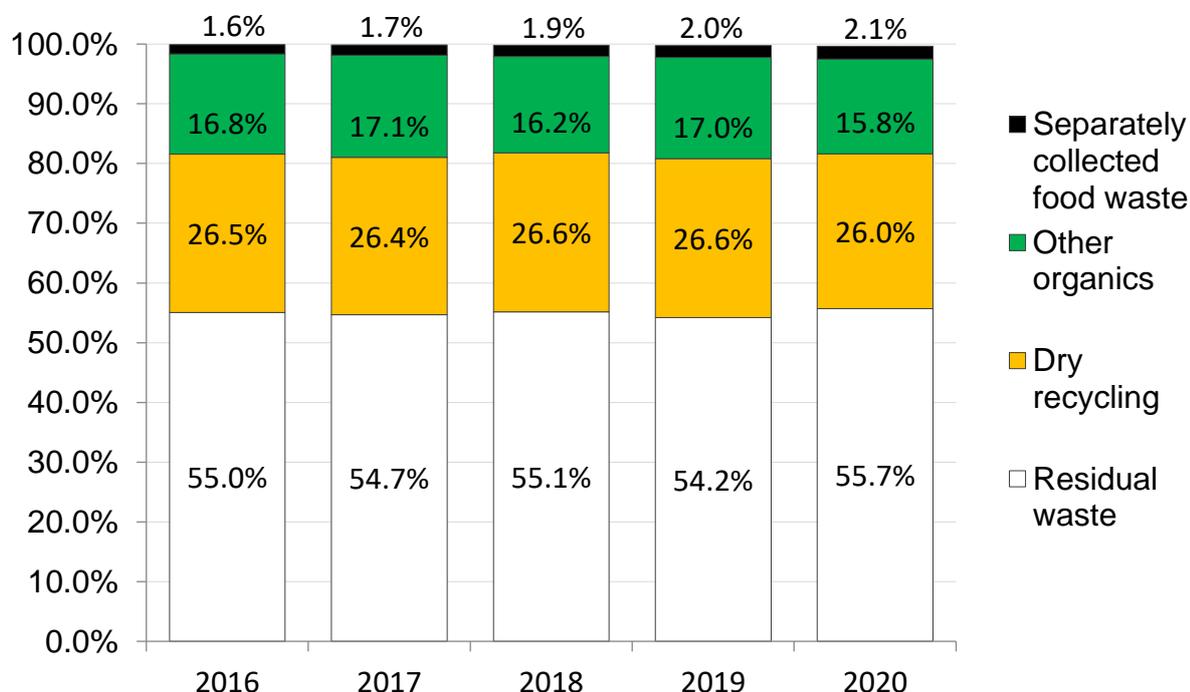
- a) Total recycling is calculated from disposal tonnages sent to reprocessors as reported in WasteDataFlow. The processing of collected waste and recycling, stockpiling, process loss and transfer means that there are inevitably differences between collected and disposal tonnages reported by local authorities. Where information on some secondary waste treatments of smaller waste tonnages are not available these may not appear in disposal tonnages in this table. For these reasons Total Recycling and Total Residual Waste will not sum to Total Waste from Households. Subtotals in the table may not add due to rounding.
- b) Total waste from households is calculated from collection tonnages reported in WasteDataFlow. It includes dry recycling/preparing for reuse and organics, and residual waste (or 'black bag' waste) and rejects from recycling. It excludes collected tonnages of plasterboard, rubble, or soil. IBA metal is included in the recycling figures.

- In 2020, the total weight of 'waste from households' in England was 22.6 million tonnes, up from 22.1 million tonnes in 2019.
- The weight of waste sent for recycling was 9.9 million tonnes in 2020, a 1.2 per cent decrease from 10.1 million tonnes in 2019.
- Residual waste was 12.6 million tonnes in 2020, up from 12.0 million tonnes in 2019. This was an increase of 5.1 per cent.
- The 'waste from households' recycling rate was 44.0 per cent in 2020, a decrease of 1.5 percentage points from 2019 when the rate was 45.5 per cent.
- Other organics make a significant contribution to the overall recycling rate. In 2020 the impact of service disruptions to collections and HWRC closures would have impacted on the tonnage. In 2020 the tonnage of 'other organics' decreased by 0.2 million tonnes, 4.4 per cent lower than in 2019.
- Metals that had been recovered from incinerated waste and then recycled (IBA metal) contributed 222 thousand tonnes, up from 201 thousand tonnes in 2019. This was an increase of 10.6 per cent.
- When IBA metal is excluded, the 'waste from households' recycling rate was 43.0 per cent in 2020, a decrease of 1.6 percentage points from the 2019 rate of 44.6 per cent.

2.2 Waste from Households: Waste Streams (Figures 4 to 8)

Figure 4: Waste composition: Waste stream proportions as a percentage of total 'waste from households', 2015-2020, England

Percent of waste from households



Notes

Residual waste includes residual 'waste from households' regular collections (black bags), bulky waste, residual waste from civic amenity centres, and rejects from recycling. It excludes waste diverted for recycling from residual waste.

Dry recycling includes paper and card, glass, plastic, waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), scrap metals including those reclaimed from incinerator bottom ash as well as other materials.

Other organics includes green garden waste, mixed garden and food waste, wood for composting and other compostable waste.

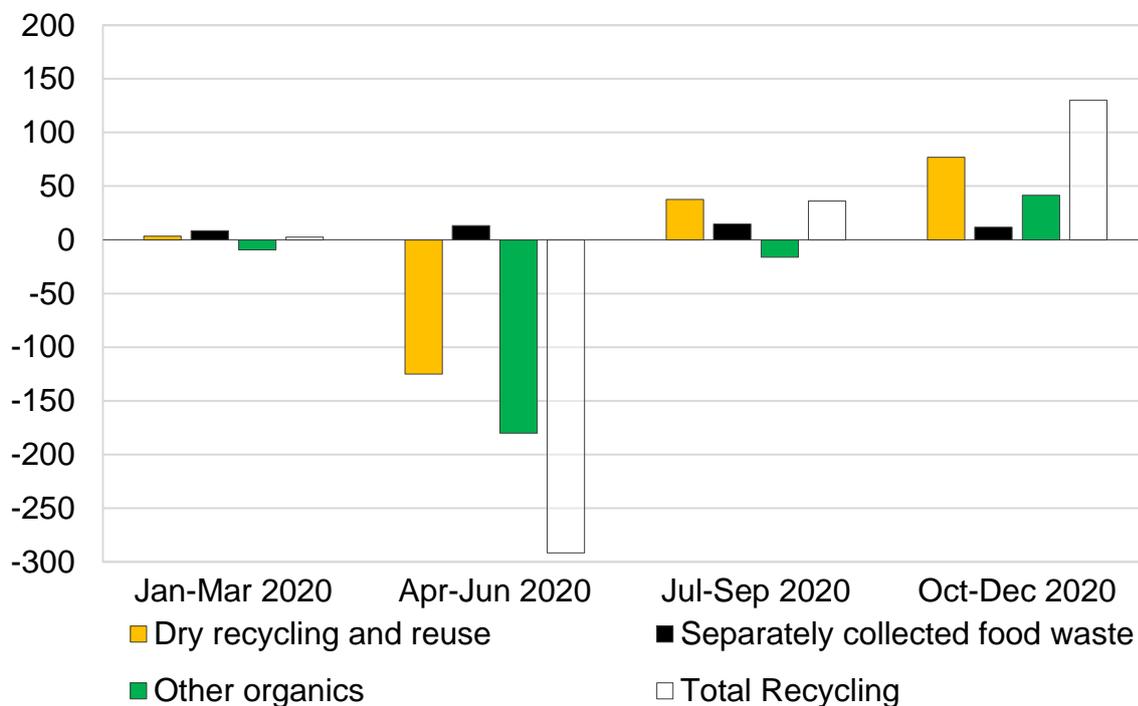
Numbers may not add to exactly 100. This is due to rounding.

- A total of 22.6 million tonnes of 'waste from households' was treated in England in 2020. Of this, 55.7 per cent was residual waste, 26.0 per cent was dry recycling, 15.8 per cent was 'other organics'—including green garden waste and mixed garden and food waste—and 2.1 per cent was separately collected food waste.
- The majority (59.1 per cent) of 'waste from households' recycling in 2020 was dry recycle.
- The tonnage of dry recycling, which includes paper and card, glass, plastic, waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), and scrap metals including those reclaimed from incinerator bottom ash, as well as other materials decreased slightly, but remained at around 5.9 million tonnes in 2020. As a proportion of total 'waste from households', it was down from 2019 at 26.0 per cent.

- Separately collected food waste rose by 11.0 per cent to 485 thousand tonnes in 2020 from 437 thousand tonnes in 2019. However, it remained only a small proportion of total 'waste from households,' at 2.1 per cent.
- The weight of 'other organic' waste—including garden waste, mixed garden and food waste, wood for composting and other compostable waste—accounted for 15.8 per cent of total 'waste from households'.
- The tonnage of other organics decreased by 0.2 million tonnes or 4.4 per cent to 3.6 million tonnes in 2020. This decrease has the impact of decreasing the overall recycling rate by around 0.7 of a percentage point.
- As a proportion of total recycling, 'other organics' comprised 36.0 per cent in 2020, a decrease of 1.2 percentage points from 2019, and at its lowest point between 2010 and 2020.
- As a proportion of total recycling, separately collected food waste comprised 4.9 per cent. This has increased by 0.5 of a percentage point from 2019. Whilst small this continues the longer trend for incremental increases each year, from 1.3 per cent in 2010.
- Organic waste tonnages are variable, linked to the season, weather and plant growing conditions. However, in 2020 the main impact on organic tonnages is likely to have been as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown. Figure 5 shows quarterly changes in the tonnage of total recycling for 'waste from households' in England between 2019 and 2020, and also the variation in dry and organic recycling.

Figure 5: Quarterly year on year change in weight of recycled 'waste from households', 2020 compared to 2019, England (thousand tonnes)

Thousand tonnes



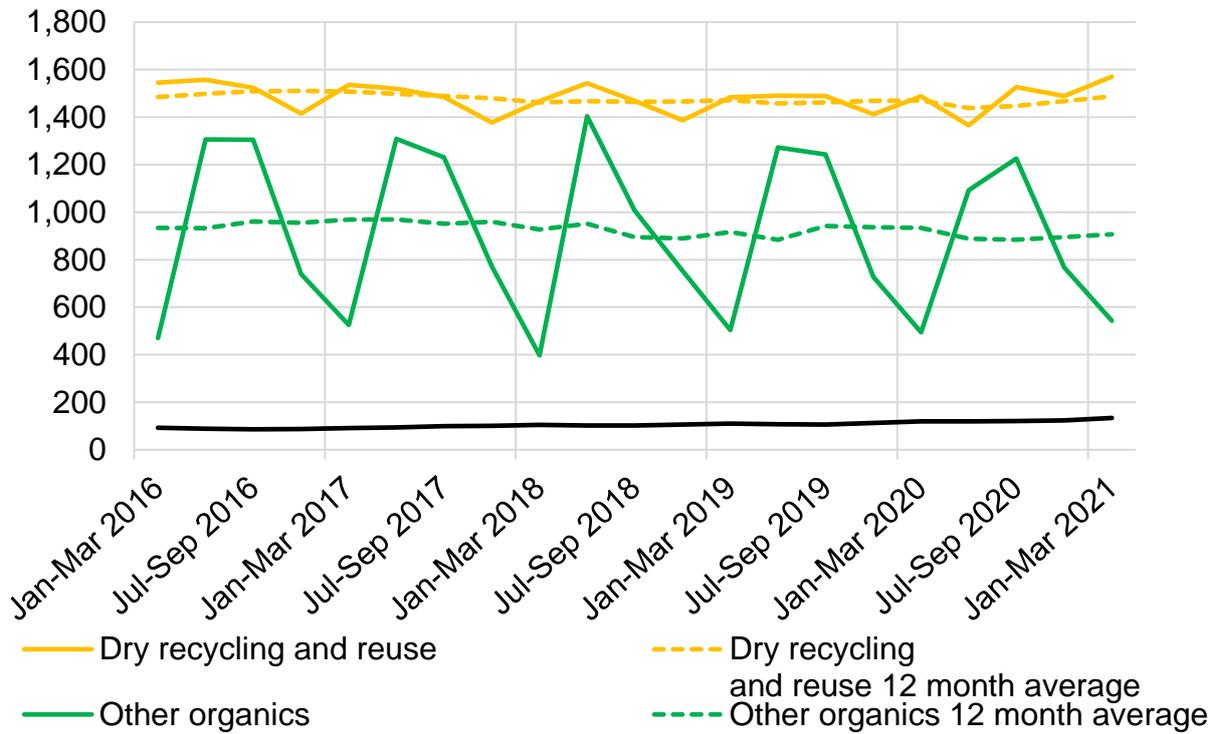
- Comparative to the same period in 2019 there was little change in recycling streams in Jan-Mar 2020.
- In April to June 2020 the tonnage of 'other organic' 'waste from households' fell by 14.2 per cent, and 'dry recycling' by 8.4 per cent. This was due to the impact of COVID-19 with some local authorities unable to maintain dry recycling and organics collections. In addition to this many HWRC were subject to temporary closure and had limitations on use upon reopening.
- A gradual easing of lockdown rules combined with higher levels of household recycling arisings, due to increased time at home, resulted in a recovery in tonnages of dry materials sent for recycling the second half of the year.

Quarterly trends over a longer time period from January to March 2016, are shown in Figures 6 and 7, which incorporate the data for the latest available quarter, January to March 2021, as well. Figure 7 shows quarterly dry and organic recycling as a proportion of total 'waste from households' and a smoothed 12-month rolling average for the overall recycling rate.

The smoothed 12-month rolling average 'waste from households' recycling rate has ranged from 43.8 to 45.5 per cent over this time period.

Figure 6: 'Waste from households' quarterly recycling volumes by waste type, England, with 12 month moving averages (thousand tonnes)

Thousand tonnes



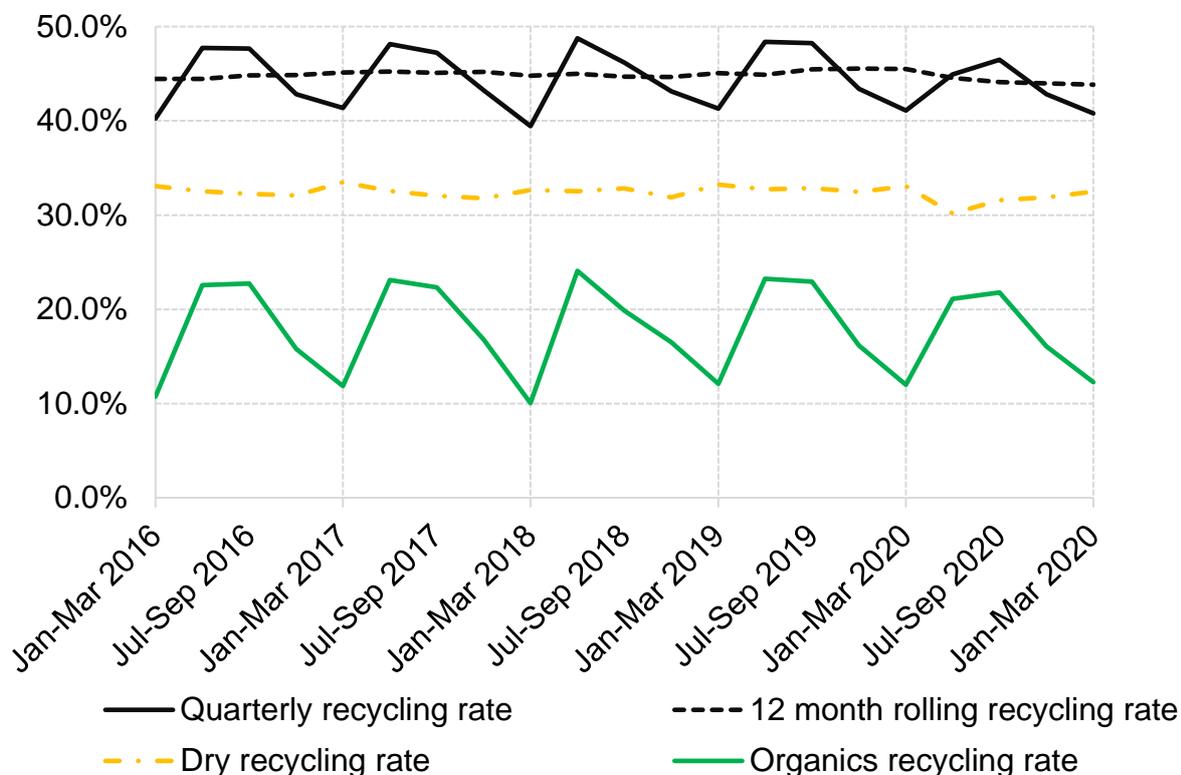
Notes

Dry recycling includes paper and card, glass, plastic, waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), scrap metals including those reclaimed from incinerator bottom ash as well as other materials.

Other organics includes green garden waste, mixed garden and food waste, wood for composting and other compostable waste.

Figure 7: 'Waste from households' quarterly recycling rate, England, Jan-Mar 2016 to Jan-Mar 2021

Percent



Notes

Recycling is 'recycling, composting and anaerobic digestion, and preparing for reuse.'

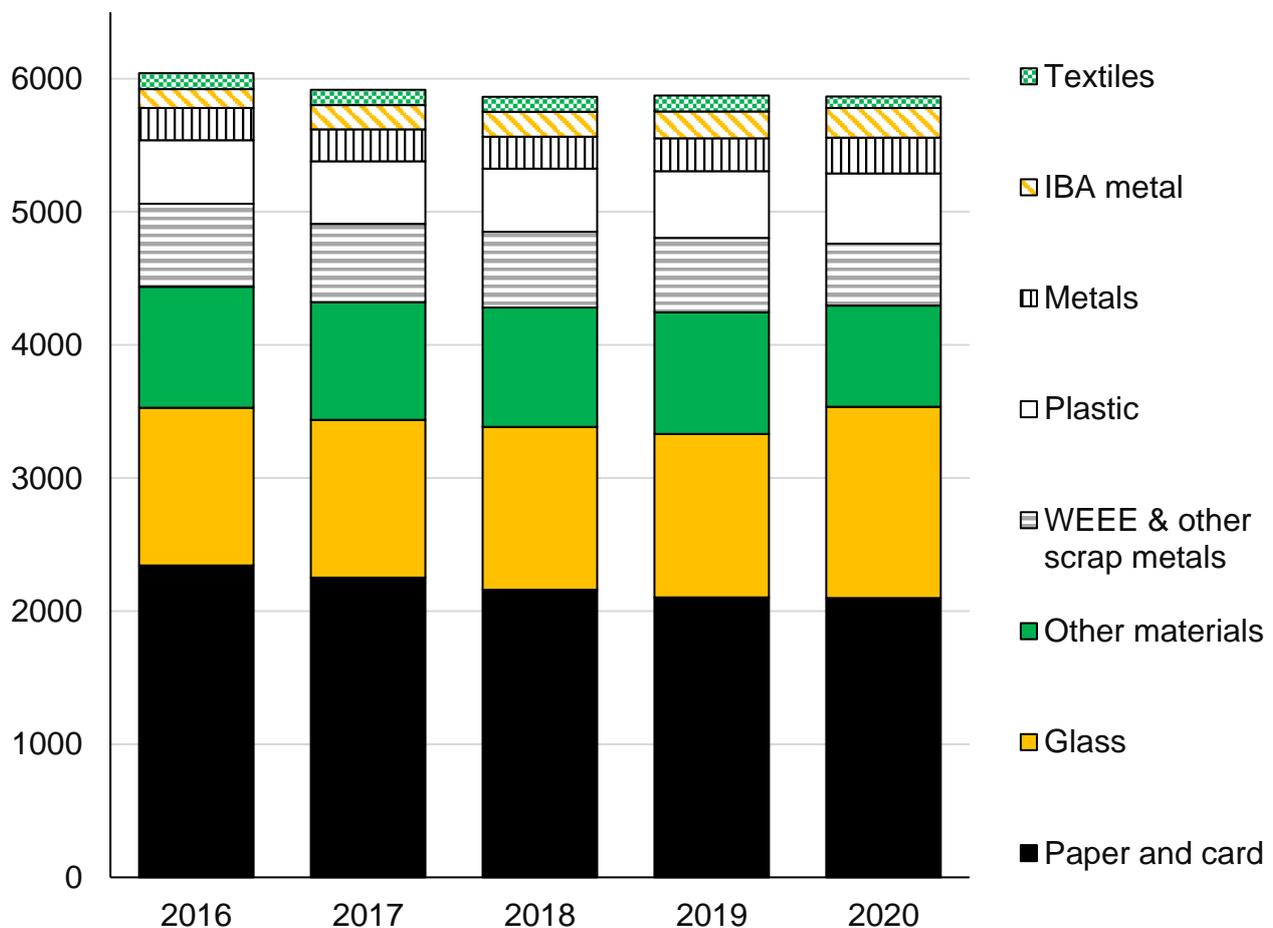
2.3 Waste from Households: Dry Recycling Composition (Figure 8 and Table 2)

- Dry recycling including IBA metals remained at 5.9 million tonnes in 2020. It made up 26.1 per cent of total 'waste from households' and 59.1 per cent of all 'waste from households' recycling.
- Despite disruption to kerbside collection services there were some large increases in the tonnage of some materials recycled as lockdown increased consumption of food and drink at home. Plastics increased by 26 thousand tonnes or (5.2 per cent), metals by 21 thousand tonnes (8.4 per cent), and glass 209 thousand tonnes (17 per cent). Paper and card decreased very slightly by 5 thousand tonnes (-0.2 per cent).
- WEEE – was down by 93 thousand tonnes (17 per cent) mostly due to the impact of HWRC closures.
- Textiles were 32 thousand tonnes lower (27 per cent) impacted by HWRC closures and temporary closure of charity shops.

- IBA metals increased by 21 thousand tonnes (8.4 per cent) as energy recovery from waste continued to remove waste from landfill.
- Other materials were down 154 thousand tonnes or 17 per cent.
- The largest changes in tonnages were seen in glass, other materials, and WEEE.

Figure 8: 'Waste from households' dry recycling composition, England, 2016 to 2020 (thousand tonnes)

Thousand tonnes



Notes

Other materials includes batteries (both automotive and post-consumer), bric-a-brac, chipboard and MDF, composite food and beverage cartons, composite wood materials, fire extinguishers, furniture, ink and toner cartridges, mattresses, mineral oil, paint, tyres (car, large vehicle, van and mixed tyres), vegetable oil, video tapes, DVDs and CDs, wood, and other.

The relative proportions of the materials that made up dry recycling in 2019 and 2020, are shown in Table 2

Table 2: 'Waste from households' dry recycling composition by percentage proportion in England, 2019 and 2020

| Recyclate | 2019 | 2020 | Percentage point change |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------------------|
| Paper and card | 35.8% | 35.8% | 0.0% |
| Glass | 20.9% | 24.5% | 3.6% |
| Other materials | 15.6% | 13.0% | -2.6% |
| WEEE & other scrap metals | 9.5% | 7.9% | -1.6% |
| Plastic | 8.5% | 9.0% | 0.5% |
| Metals | 4.2% | 4.6% | 0.4% |
| IBA metal | 3.4% | 3.8% | 0.4% |
| Textiles | 2.0% | 1.5% | -0.5% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% | 0.0% |

- Despite some variations in tonnages, the relative proportions of materials had not substantially changed up to 2020.
- The COVID-19 pandemic had various impacts on waste services, waste collection and arisings. Whilst the overall effect of this on the total dry recycling total tonnage was of a small decrease the relative proportions of each material type changed in 2020.
- Glass increased by 3.6 percentage points to 24.5 per cent of dry recycling in 2020. Other materials decreased by 2.6 percentage points to 13 per cent. WEEE decreased by 1.6 percentage points down to 7.9 per cent in 2020.
- The proportions of plastic, metals, and IBA metal all increased slightly in 2020, while paper & card was unchanged at 35.8 per cent of the total.
- The proportion of IBA metal was 3.8 per cent in 2020, an increase of 2.1 percentage point since 2015— the first year that data was available—when it comprised 1.7 per cent of dry recycling.

3 Waste from Households – Financial Year Figures

- In 2020/21, the total weight of ‘waste from households’ in England increased to 23.0 million tonnes up 4.0 per cent from 22.1 million tonnes in 2019/20.
- The amount of ‘waste from households’ sent to recycling in 2020/21 was unchanged from 2019/20 at 10.1 million tonnes.
- The ‘waste from households’ recycling rate was 43.8 per cent in 2020/21, a decrease of 1.7 percentage points on the 2019/20 recycling rate, which was 45.5 per cent.
- Dry recycling was 6.0 million tonnes in 2020/21, increasing slightly from 5.9 million in 2019/20. Organic recycling decreased by 1.2 per cent to 4.1 million tonnes. This decrease was driven by disruption of kerbside collections and HWRC closures.
- The tonnage of residual waste in 2020/21 was 6.9 per cent higher than in 2019/20, up 0.8 million to 12.8 million tonnes. As a proportion of ‘waste from households’, it increased by 1.5 percentage points to 55.8 per cent of the total.

4 Management of All Local Authority Collected Waste, 2020/21 (Table 3 and Figure 9)

Local authority collected waste consists of all ‘waste from households’, street sweepings, municipal parks and gardens waste, beach cleansing waste, and waste resulting from the clearance of fly-tipped materials plus some commercial and/or industrial waste. For further detail, see Annex 1 of “[Local authority waste statistics – Recycling measures](#)” on gov.uk.

As a result of extra granularity of data reported through [Q100](#), it is not appropriate when referring to the management of waste for landfill, incineration or recovery to compare the data for April 2015 onwards too closely to any of the previous annual data. In particular, Q100 allows for more extensive reporting of refuse derived fuel (RDF), incineration, and outputs from incineration.

- Total local authority managed waste in 2020/21 was 25.9 million tonnes, up by 322 thousand tonnes (1.3 per cent) from 2019/20.
- 7.8 per cent of all local authority collected waste was sent to landfill in 2020/21. This was a total of 2.0 million tonnes, and 0.2 million tonnes lower (a decrease of 7.1 per cent) than in 2019/20.
- 76.2 per cent (1.5 million tonnes) of waste sent to Landfill was sent direct in 2020/21. This is a decrease from 2019/20, when 73.9 per cent of all local authority collected waste was sent to landfill was sent directly.

- 48.2 per cent of all local authority waste was incinerated¹ in 2020/21. This was a total of 12.5 million tonnes, and an increase of 0.8 million tonnes (7.2 per cent) from 2019/20. This increase reflecting further reduction in waste to Landfill and increased household waste residual arisings.
- 68.7 per cent (8.6 million tonnes) of waste sent to incineration was sent direct in 2020/21. This proportion is lower than in 2019/20 when 69.3 per cent (8.1 million tonnes) of local authority collected waste was sent direct to incineration.
- The amount of local authority collected waste sent for recycling in 2020/21 was 10.7 million tonnes, down 0.2 million tonnes from 2019/20. Waste sent for recycling comprised 41.4 per cent of all local authority waste, a decrease of 1.4 percentage points from 2019/20.
- Table 3 shows the tonnage of local authority collected waste sent to landfill, incineration, or recycling for the past five years. Figure 7 shows how local authority collected waste has been managed since 2000/01.

Table 3: Management of all Local Authority collected waste financial year figures, England, 2015/16 to 2020/21 (thousand tonnes)

| Waste disposal method | 2016/17 | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2020/21 % change over 2019/20 |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Landfill | 4,136 | 3,213 | 2,756 | 2,169 | 2,016 | -7.1% |
| Recycled/composted <i>of which:-</i> | 11,252 | 10,860 | 10,926 | 10,949 | 10,708 | -2.2% |
| Household waste | 10,329 | 9,981 | 10,007 | 10,085 | 10,080 | -0.1% |
| Non household waste | 923 | 879 | 919 | 864 | 627 | -27.4% |
| Total incineration <i>of which:-</i> | 10,182 | 10,846 | 11,205 | 11,633 | 12,466 | 7.2% |
| Incineration with EfW | 9,958 | 10,632 | 11,031 | 11,448 | 12,342 | 7.8% |
| Incineration without EfW ¹ | 224 | 214 | 174 | 185 | 124 | -32.8% |
| Other | 748 | 706 | 699 | 816 | 700 | -14.2% |
| Total local authority waste managed | 26,319 | 25,626 | 25,586 | 25,568 | 25,890 | 1.3% |
| Recycled/composted waste as percentage of total | 42.8% | 42.4% | 42.7% | 42.8% | 41.4% | -1.5 percentage points |

Notes

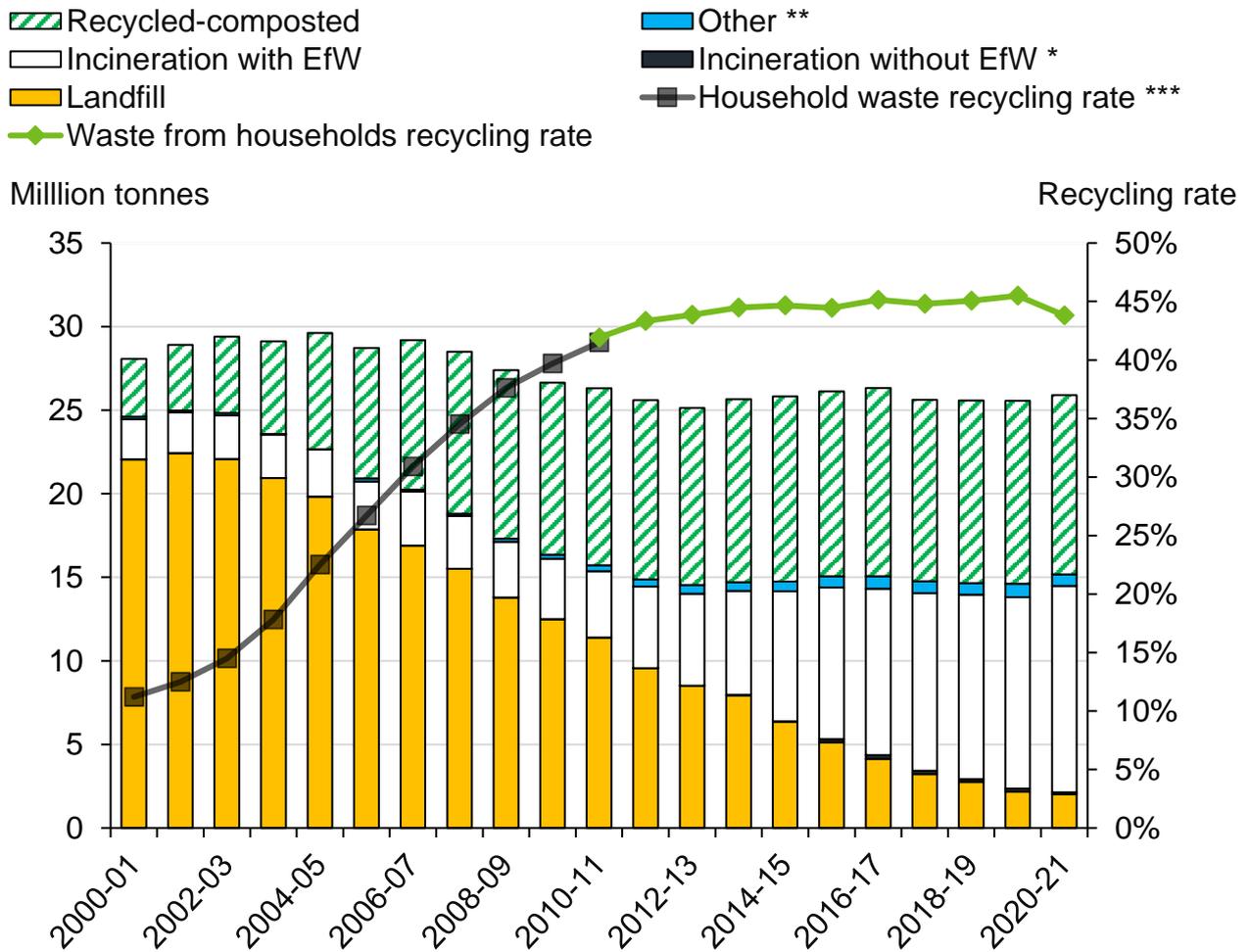
Incineration with energy recovery/without energy recovery includes incineration bottom ash (IBA) and metals from IBA.

Recycling figures in this table do not include metals recovered from IBA.

Numbers may not add to exact totals. This is due to rounding.

¹ Incineration with energy recovery/without energy recovery includes incineration bottom ash (IBA) and metals from IBA.

Figure 9: Management of all local authority collected waste and recycling rates, England, 2000/01 – 2020/21



Notes

* **Incineration with energy recover/without energy recovery** includes incinerator bottom ash (IBA) and metals from IBA. This is consistent with the existing definition for household waste recycling so is not impacted by the change in ‘waste from households’ recycling definition.

** **Other** includes waste treated/disposed of through other unspecified methods as well as process and moisture loss.

*** **The Household waste recycling rate** is based on a broader measure of waste and is not directly comparable to the ‘waste from households’ recycling rate. For further information on definitions, refer to the glossary.

IBA metals are included within the ‘waste from households’ recycling rate shown on this chart from April 2015/16 onwards but is not included in household waste recycling.

5 England and the Regions Local Authority Collected Waste Destinations (Table 4 and Figure 10)

- There are regional differences in the management of local authority collected waste, as shown in Table 4 and Figure 10.

Table 4: Management of all local authority collected waste, England by region, 2020/21 (thousand tonnes)

| Region | Landfill | | Incineration* | | Recycled/Composted** | | Other*** | | Total |
|--------------------------|----------|------|---------------|------|----------------------|------|----------|-----|--------|
| | | | | | | | | | |
| East Midlands | 303 | 13.0 | 1,013 | 43.3 | 959 | 41.0 | 63 | 2.7 | 2,337 |
| Eastern | 645 | 21.9 | 876 | 29.8 | 1,344 | 45.7 | 78 | 2.7 | 2,943 |
| London | 49 | 1.4 | 2,280 | 64.1 | 1,062 | 29.9 | 163 | 4.6 | 3,554 |
| North East | 104 | 7.9 | 749 | 56.4 | 449 | 33.8 | 26 | 2.0 | 1,329 |
| North West | 335 | 9.2 | 1,588 | 43.7 | 1,625 | 44.7 | 87 | 2.4 | 3,635 |
| South East | 159 | 3.9 | 2,000 | 48.5 | 1,870 | 45.4 | 91 | 2.2 | 4,121 |
| South West | 169 | 6.4 | 1,143 | 43.2 | 1,278 | 48.3 | 58 | 2.2 | 2,647 |
| West Midlands | 154 | 5.5 | 1,525 | 54.7 | 1,060 | 38.1 | 47 | 1.7 | 2,786 |
| Yorkshire and the Humber | 98 | 3.9 | 1,291 | 50.9 | 1,060 | 41.8 | 87 | 3.4 | 2,537 |
| England | 2,016 | 7.8 | 12,466 | 48.1 | 10,708 | 41.4 | 700 | 2.7 | 25,890 |

* **Incineration includes incineration with energy recover/without energy recovery.** This includes incinerator bottom ash (IBA) and metals from IBA.

** **Recycled/Composted** refers to the proportion of all local authority collected waste sent for recycling/composting.

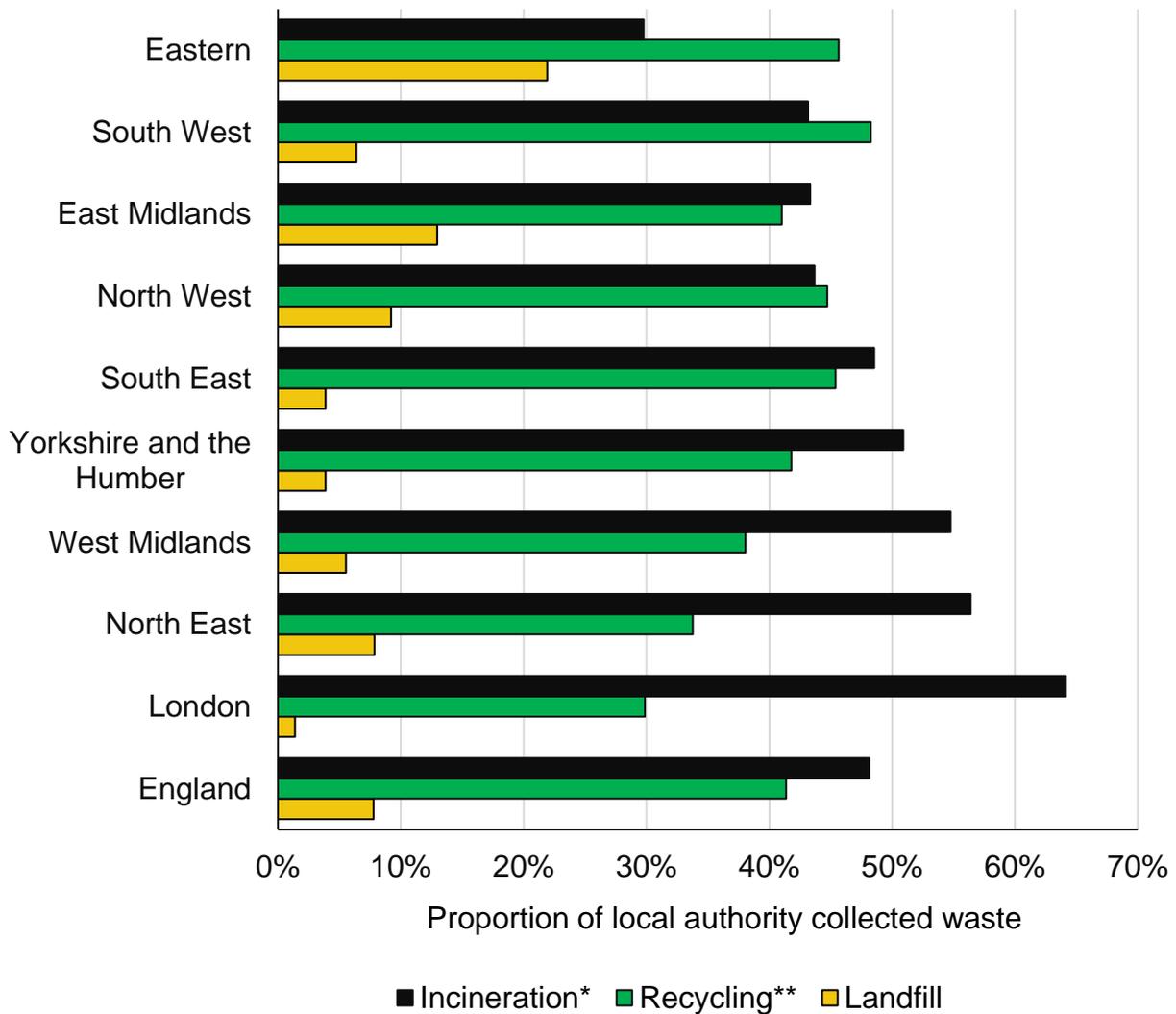
*** **Other** includes waste treated/disposed of through other unspecified methods as well as process and moisture loss.

Numbers may not add to exact totals. This is due to rounding.

- The South East managed the largest tonnage of local authority collected waste in 2020/21 at 4.1 million tonnes. This was 15.9 per cent of all local authority collected waste in England. The North East managed the smallest tonnage in 2020/21 at 1.3 million tonnes, or 5.1 per cent of the total for England.
- Eastern region sent the largest proportion of their total local authority collected waste to landfill at 21.9 per cent (0.6 million tonnes). London sent the smallest proportion at 1.4 per cent. At a national level, 7.8 per cent of all local authority collected waste in England was sent to landfill in 2020/21. This was 2.0 million tonnes.
- London sent the largest proportion of their total local authority collected waste to incineration in 2020/21 at 64.1 per cent (2.3 million tonnes). Eastern region sent the smallest proportion at 29.8 per cent. Overall, 48.1 per cent of all local authority collected waste in England was sent to incineration in 2020/21. This was 12.5 million tonnes.

- In England, 10.7 million tonnes (41.4 per cent) of local authority collected waste was sent for recycling in 2020/21. The region that sent the largest proportion of local authority collected waste to recycling was the South West, which sent 1.3 million tonnes (48.3 per cent). The region that sent the smallest proportion of waste to recycling was London, which sent 1.1 million tonnes (29.9 per cent).

Figure 10: Management of all local authority collected waste, England by region, 2020/21 (proportions of total local authority collected waste)



Notes

* **Incineration** includes incineration with energy recover/without energy recovery. This includes incinerator bottom ash (IBA) and metals from IBA.

** **Recycling** refers to the proportion of all local authority collected waste sent for recycling, composting, anaerobic digestion or reuse.

6 Household Waste Recycling

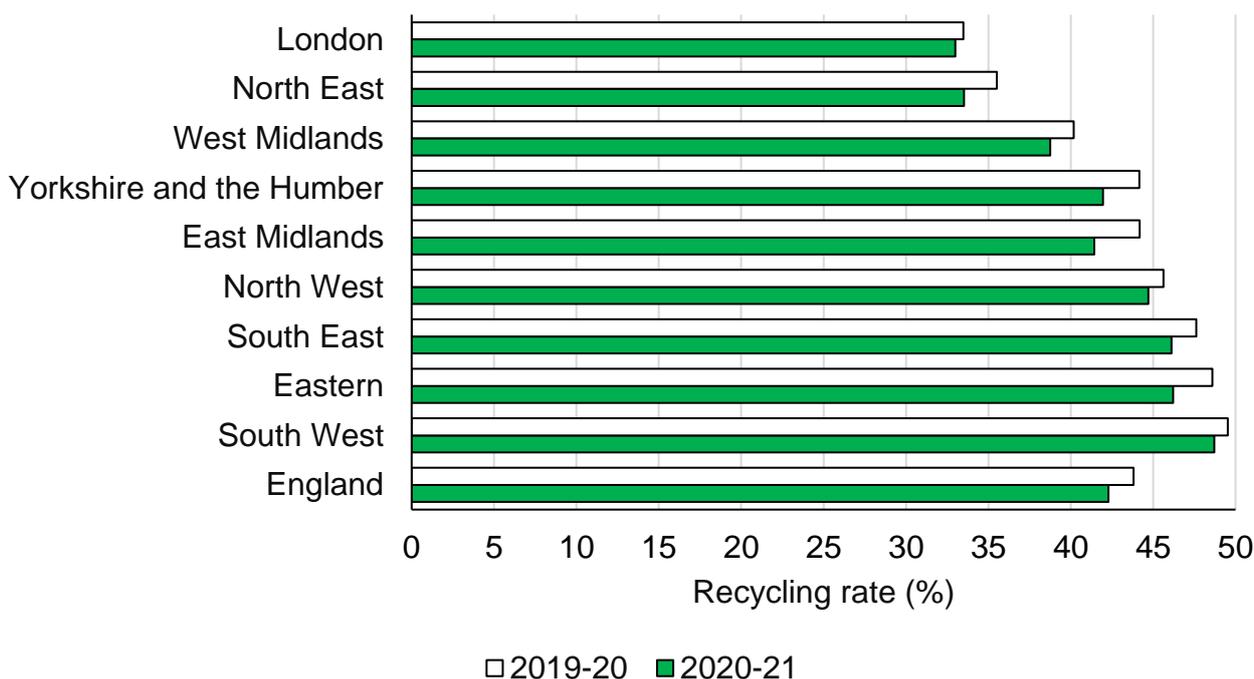
6.1 Household Waste recycling rates for England and the Regions (Figure 11)

The 'household waste' (ex-NI 192) measure is a broader definition of waste than the 'waste from households' measure. It includes street bins, street sweepings, gully-emptying, parks and grounds waste, soil, and compost-like output, as well as separately collected healthcare waste and asbestos. It does not include IBA metals.

At a regional level, there is considerable variation across authorities, influenced by how heavily populated an area is, the kind of housing present, and the level of other organic or garden waste collected. As an example, in built-up areas with a higher proportion of flats, residents may find it difficult or be unwilling to store waste for recycling; and will not be producing garden waste for collection. This will reduce recycling rates for these authorities. Similarly, authorities with higher recycling rates are likely to be advantaged by good householder response to recycling schemes and a higher tonnage of organic or garden waste being collected.

Regional differences are illustrated in Figure 11.

Figure 11: 'Household waste' recycling rates, England and regions, 2019/20 and 2020/21



- London had the lowest 'household waste' recycling rate in 2020/21 at 33.0 per cent. The region with the highest 'household waste' recycling rate in 2020/21 was the South West at 48.7 per cent.
- All regions had a decrease in their 'household waste' recycling rate in 2020/21.

- The region with the smallest decrease was London with a decrease of 0.5 percentage points. The region with the largest decrease was East Midlands with a decrease of 2.8 percentage points.

6.2 Household Waste Recycling Rates for Individual Local Authorities (Table 5)

- At an individual local authority level, 'household waste' recycling rates ranged from 17.9 per cent to 64.2 per cent. The overall average figure for England was 42.3 per cent, a 1.5 percentage point decrease from 2019/20.
- 'Household waste' recycling is often similar in adjacent authorities, though there is a wide range between the highest and lowest recycling rates in all regions of England and even within a region. Figure 12 shows the geographic distribution of 'household waste' recycling rates in 2020/21.
- Table 5 shows the authorities with the highest and lowest recycling rates in each region as well as the proportion of their total recycling that consists of organic waste. Generally, an authority in which a smaller proportion of their total recycling is accounted for by organic waste will have a lower recycling rate, though this is not always the case.

Table 5: Local authorities with the highest and lowest household recycling rates in each region in 2020/21

| Region | Position | Authority | Recycling Rate | Percent of Total Recycling that is Organic |
|----------------------|----------|---|----------------|--|
| East Midlands | Lowest | Bassetlaw District Council | 23.6% | 38.0% |
| East Midlands | Highest | South Northamptonshire District Council | 59.6% | 59.5% |
| Eastern | Lowest | Thurrock Council | 28.0% | 38.0% |
| Eastern | Highest | St Albans City and District Council | 64.2% | 55.6% |
| London | Lowest | Tower Hamlets LB | 19.3% | 11.8% |
| London | Highest | Bexley LB | 50.0% | 38.2% |
| North East | Lowest | Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council | 24.3% | 32.5% |
| North East | Highest | Newcastle-upon-Tyne City Council MBC | 40.6% | 45.7% |
| North West | Lowest | Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council | 17.9% | 47.2% |
| North West | Highest | Cheshire East | 57.5% | 54.9% |
| South East | Lowest | Dartford Borough Council | 24.5% | 24.8% |
| South East | Highest | South Oxfordshire District Council | 63.6% | 55.7% |
| South West | Lowest | Exeter City Council | 27.8% | 37.0% |
| South West | Highest | North Somerset Council | 60.4% | 44.8% |
| West Midlands | Lowest | Birmingham City Council | 22.5% | 28.5% |
| West Midlands | Highest | Stratford-on-Avon District Council | 59.4% | 59.8% |
| Yorkshire and Humber | Lowest | Kirklees MBC | 25.0% | 42.2% |
| Yorkshire and Humber | Highest | East Riding of Yorkshire Council | 60.8% | 52.6% |

- Across the different regions, the range (or difference) in recycling rate between the highest performing local authority and the lowest performing local authority varied between 16 and 40 percentage points.
- The region with the widest range in its recycling was the North West at 40 percentage points, followed by the South East at 39 percentage points. The West Midlands had a range of 37 percentage points. Yorkshire and the Humber, Eastern and East Midlands each had a range of 36 percentage points. London had a range of 31 percentage points.
- The region with the smallest range in its recycling rates is the North East at 16 percentage points. This reflects the fact that the highest recycling rate in the region is relatively low at 40.6 per cent (Newcastle-upon-Tyne City Council MBC), compared to some other regions where the highest recycling rates range from between 50 and 64 percent.
- Overall, in England a total of nine authorities had 'household waste' recycling rates greater than 60 per cent. Seventy two authorities had recycling rates greater than 50 per cent.
- St Albans City and District Council had the highest 'household waste' recycling rate in England in 2020/21 at 64.2 per cent. Organic waste made up 55.6 per cent of their total household recycling tonnage. South Oxfordshire District Council, had the second highest recycling rate at 63.6 per cent and 55.7 per cent of their recycling was organics. Three Rivers District Council had the third highest recycling rate in England at 63.1 per cent with 50.1 per cent of their recycling tonnage being organic.
- This is the first year St Albans City and District Council has had the highest 'household waste' recycling rate in England, having had the fifth highest recycling rate overall in 2018/19 and 2019/20. South Oxfordshire District Council has been in the top three since 2010/11. Three rivers District Council has been in the top three for the last three years.
- Over the last 5 years, St Albans City and District Council has had an average 'household waste' recycling rate of 61.3 per cent; South Oxfordshire District Council has had an average recycling rate of 63.3 per cent; and Three Rivers District Council has had an average recycling rate of 62.9 per cent.
- Six authorities have similar or higher five-year average recycling rates to St Albans City and District Council. These are East riding of Yorkshire Council (63.8 per cent), South Oxfordshire District Council (63.3 per cent), Three Rivers District Council (62.9 per cent), Vale of White Horse District Council (62.7 per cent), and Surrey Heath Borough Council (62.0 per cent), Rochford District Council (61.5 per cent).
- In 2020/21, Chelmsford Borough Council had the highest proportion of organic/green waste comprising 77.5 per cent of their total recycled 'household waste'. Their overall 'household waste' recycling rate was 41.1 per cent.

- Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council had the lowest 'household waste' recycling rate in England in 2020/21 at 17.9 per cent, with 47.2 per cent of the authority's recycled 'household waste' being organic/green waste. The second lowest 'household waste' recycling rate was Tower Hamlets LB (19.3 per cent; 11.8 per cent organic), and the third lowest was Newham LB (20.9 per cent; 16.1 per cent organic).

6.3 Household Waste Recycling Rates Local authority performance by region (Tables 6 and 7)

Table 6 shows the number and proportion of authorities in each region showing an overall increase in their recycling rate for 2020/21 compared to 2019/20.

- In total 126 (37 per cent) of the 338 local authorities in England showed an increase in their recycling rate in 2020/21. 212 authorities (63 per cent) showed a decrease.
- The South East and London had a fairly even split between authorities with an increase or those with a decrease. The South East had 51 per cent of authorities with an increase and 49 per cent with a decrease, while London had 49 per cent of authorities with an increase and 51 per cent with a decrease.
- The South East and London were the regions with the highest proportion of its authorities showing an increase. Followed by the North West (37 per cent), South West (34 per cent) Yorkshire and the Humber (32 per cent).
- The North East and East Midlands were the regions with the lowest proportion of authorities showing an increase (both at 25 per cent), followed by West Midlands (30 per cent) and Eastern at (31 per cent).

Table 7 shows the number and proportion of authorities in each region showing an overall decrease in their recycling rate for 2020/21 compared to 2019/20.

As observed earlier in this publication recycling rates are subject to significant variation each year as a result of changes in the tonnage of organics collected and this in turn is influenced by climatic conditions, and in 2020 the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on collections and HWRC opening. This should be noted particularly when considering changes of between plus and minus 1 percentage point change, where a change to the weight of organics within recycling tonnages may obscure other effects such as a change of service, or contractor.

Table 6: Recycling rates- Number of local authorities in each region with an increase in 2020/21 shown by percentage point range

| Region | Total number of authorities in region | Number of authorities with a percentage point increase in their recycling rate of | | | Total authorities with an increase | Percent of authorities with an increase in their recycling rate |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|---|-------|--------|------------------------------------|---|
| | | 0 - 1 | 1 - 5 | over 5 | | |
| East Midlands | 44 | 9 | 2 | 0 | 11 | 25% |
| Eastern | 48 | 8 | 6 | 1 | 15 | 31% |
| London | 37 | 8 | 10 | 0 | 18 | 49% |
| North East | 12 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 25% |
| North West | 43 | 7 | 9 | 0 | 16 | 37% |
| South East | 70 | 17 | 17 | 2 | 36 | 51% |
| South West | 29 | 3 | 7 | 0 | 10 | 34% |
| West Midlands | 33 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 10 | 30% |
| Yorkshire and Humber | 22 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 7 | 32% |
| Total | 338 | 65 | 58 | 3 | 126 | 37% |

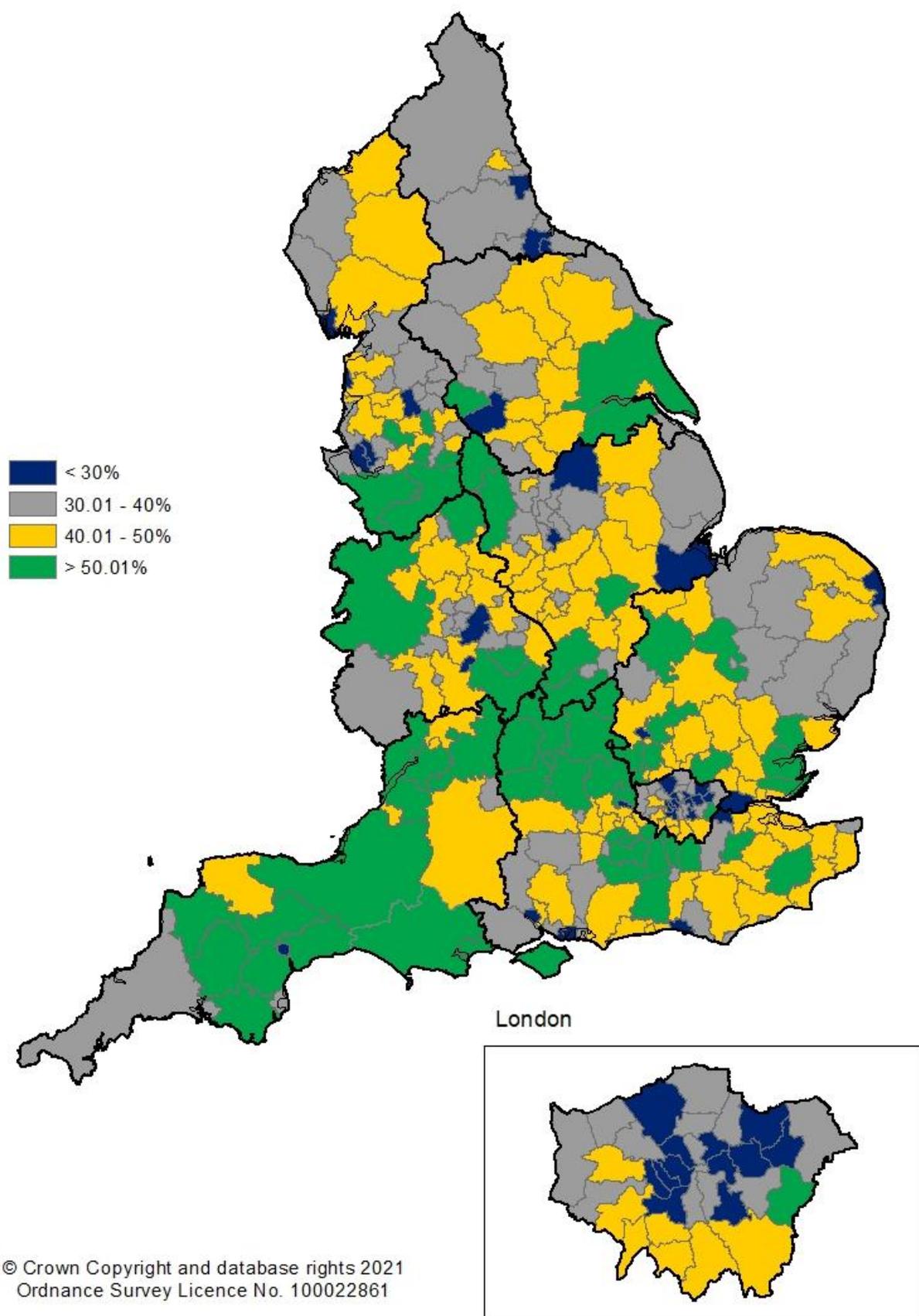
- Table 6 shows that in England in 2020/21, 3 authorities (1 per cent of the total) had increases of over 5 percentage points in their recycling rate, 58 (17 per cent) increased by between 1 and 5 percentage points and that 65 (19 per cent) authorities had an increase in their recycling rate of less than 1 percentage point.
- Local authorities with increases in their recycling rate of over 5 percentage points were Runnymede Borough Council (South East region) which had a 5.2 point increase to give a recycling rate of 49.0%. Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (South East) increased by 5.2 percentage points to 51.6%. Tendering District council (Eastern) increased by 5.1 percentage points to 40.2%.
- The South East had 17 authorities with an increase of between 1 and 5 percentage points (24 per cent of authorities in that regional) , followed by London with 10 authorities (27 per cent), and the North West with 9 authorities (21 per cent).

Table 7: Recycling rates - Number of local authorities in each region with a decrease in 2020/21 shown by percentage point range

| Region | Total number of authorities in region | Number of authorities with a percentage point decrease in their recycling rate of | | | Total authorities with a decrease | Percent of authorities with an decrease in their recycling rate |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|---|-------|--------|-----------------------------------|---|
| | | 0 - 1 | 1 - 5 | over 5 | | |
| East Midlands | 44 | 11 | 18 | 4 | 33 | 75% |
| Eastern | 48 | 9 | 21 | 3 | 33 | 69% |
| London | 37 | 5 | 12 | 2 | 19 | 51% |
| North East | 12 | 1 | 7 | 1 | 9 | 75% |
| North West | 43 | 7 | 17 | 3 | 27 | 63% |
| South East | 70 | 14 | 20 | 0 | 34 | 49% |
| South West | 29 | 11 | 8 | 0 | 19 | 66% |
| West Midlands | 33 | 5 | 17 | 1 | 23 | 70% |
| Yorkshire and Humber | 22 | 2 | 13 | 0 | 15 | 68% |
| Total | 338 | 65 | 133 | 14 | 212 | 63% |

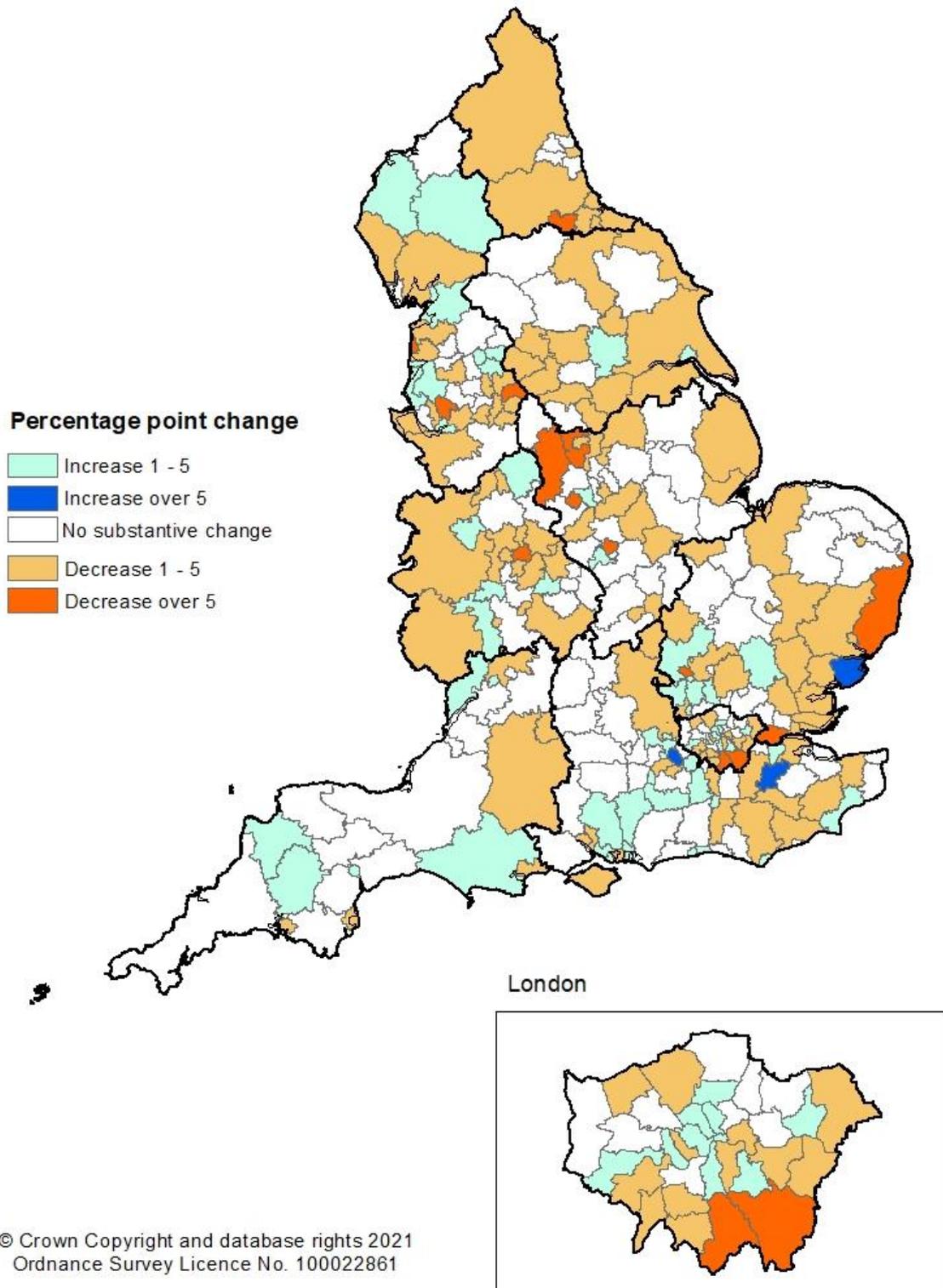
- Table 7 shows that in England in 2020/21, 14 authorities (4 per cent of the total) had a decrease of over 5 percentage points in their recycling rate, 133 (39 per cent) decreased by between 1 and 5 percentage points and 65 (19 per cent) authorities had a decrease in their recycling rate of less than 1 percentage point.
- There were fourteen local authorities with decreases in their recycling rate of over 5 percentage points. The five authorities with the largest decreases were Blackpool Borough Council (North West) with a decrease of 10.9 percentage points to give a recycling rate of 27.5%, Croydon LB (London) a decrease of 7.9 percentage points to 41.3%, Walsall MBC (West Midlands) with a 7.9 percentage point decrease to 32.2%, Leicester City Council a 7.2 percentage point decrease to 35.7% and North East Derbyshire District Council (both East Midlands) with a decrease of 7.2 percentage points to give a recycling rate of 39.8 %.
- The East Midlands had 4 authorities, the most of any region with a decrease of over 5 percentage points (9 per cent of authorities in that region) Eastern region had 3 authorities in this group (6 per cent of authorities) the North West region had 3 authorities (7 per cent of authorities). London had 2 authorities and the North East and West midlands region each had 1 authority with a decrease of over 5 percentage points.
- Eastern region had 21 authorities (44 per cent of authorities in that region) with a decrease of between 1 and 5 percentage points, South East region 20 authorities (29 per cent) and East Midlands 18 authorities (41 per cent).

Figure 12: Map of 'household waste' recycling rates for individual local authorities, England, 2020/21



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Figure 13: Map of change in 'household waste' recycling rates for individual local authorities, England, 2020/21 compared to 2019/20



Notes

White areas in this map indicate a local authority where the increase or decrease in the recycling rate was less than 1.0 percentage point.

7 Data and Methodology

Including information on data uses, feedback, revisions policy, methodology, glossary of terms and measures, and references. There is an accompanying [methodology document](#) for this release.

7.1 COVID-19 – The impact of the pandemic on these statistics.

The latest data shown in this publication covers April 2020 to March 2021, 12 months in which there were 2 national lockdowns and various levels of COVID-19 restrictions on working practices and individuals in between.

During the first national lockdown which commenced 23rd March 2020, some local authorities were unable to maintain collections of dry recyclates, there was suspension of garden waste collections and widespread closure of HWRC. This was due to staff shortages and the introduction of changes to working practices. The national lockdown and rules for the operation of some commercial enterprises had a significant impact on the generation of waste during this period.

The national lockdown and demands on local authority services due to staff absence or redeployment also had a major impact on the ability of some authorities to report their waste data, and this impacted the annual statistics for 2019/20 which were published a few months later than usual. ADEPT ran a weekly survey of local authorities in 2020 and 2021 which gave a narrative around the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on waste services.

Whilst there were some difficulties reported by local authorities e.g. obtaining data from smaller businesses e.g. such as charity shops (who provide reuse outlets for clothes etc) local authorities reported that the quality of the data was unaffected by the situation.

As detailed in section 1 of this publication showing analysis of quarterly waste collection figures. The period from April to June 2020 saw the biggest impact to waste collections and commercial waste as Local authorities and businesses acclimatised to and became used to working under national lockdown and COVID-19 pandemic conditions.

7.2 Data Uses

Data on waste management is used to monitor policy effectiveness and to support policy development. The underlying data held in WasteDataFlow is also used extensively by local and central government, the waste industry, and the public. Data is reported by all local authorities, often from management information supplied by their waste management contractor.

Factors affecting household waste recycling range from individual household behaviours, the advice and collection services provided by local authorities, the cost of waste treatment and disposal, and to some extent, wider issues such as the state of the economy and in 2020/21 the COVID-19 pandemic. Some quarterly waste data shows a clear seasonal fluctuation. For example, the generation of garden waste is highly seasonal, increasing sharply and pushing up recycling rates in the spring and summer months. For this reason,

comparisons should be made with the same quarter in previous years or using full 12-month periods. However, it should be remembered that in 2020/21 this seasonal effect is obscured by COVID-19, particularly in the period from April to September.

Prior to 2020/21 about 87 per cent of all waste managed by local authorities is 'waste from households' with the remainder coming from street cleaning, parks and grounds, business and construction. During 2020/21 this proportion rose to 90 per cent. Only a small proportion of the total waste from businesses and construction are covered in these statistics, with most being managed privately.

7.3 Feedback

We welcome feedback on the data from all users, including how and why the data is used. This helps us to understand the value of the statistics to external users. Please take a minute to complete this [short survey](#) (this opens in google forms). Alternatively you can email the Waste Statistics team at WasteStatistics@defra.gov.uk.

7.4 Revisions Policy

Defra will provide information about any significant revisions made to information published in this statistics release and the associated datasets. Revisions could occur for a variety of reasons, including backdating to reflect methodological improvements or the finalisation of data from third parties that was unavailable or provisional at the time of publishing. Occasionally, local authorities request revisions after this point where it is generally not possible to take the changes into account without risking the delay of publication. These typically do not have a significant impact on the headline figures, particularly at an England level.

The figures in this statistical release were extracted in October 2021 from data reported by local authorities during 2020 and 2021.

7.5 Methodology

Data from this release comes from a snapshot of the WasteDataFlow database taken in October 2021. [WasteDataFlow](#) is a UK-wide system managed by Defra in collaboration with Devolved Administration partners that is used to record the collection, treatment and disposal of local authority waste. First results using this database were produced for 2004/05 with earlier estimates of waste available from the Municipal Waste Management Surveys.

The tonnage of waste 'sent for reuse, recycling and composting' is that which is accepted by the re-processor. As such, it excludes any recycling rejects that occur during collection, sorting or further treatment. Waste diverted for recycling from the residual (or 'black bag waste') stream by further processing is included in the recycling tonnages.

7.6 Inclusion of Incinerator Bottom Ash Metal (IBA Metal) in Waste from Households Recycling

In December 2017, a change in how metal recovered and recycled after incineration of waste (IBA metal) is treated and reported for the 'waste from households' dataset only was

introduced. The tonnage of IBA metal is now included within recycling rather than being reported as 'recovery'. The amount varies depending on the amount of residual waste being incinerated and the metal content of the residual waste.

Inclusion of IBA metal has been facilitated through the new Q100 reporting structure for waste treatment, which all local authorities have been using since April 2015 (see below). This has provided the opportunity for more complete recording of waste treatment, including outputs from incineration. Therefore estimates were produced for 2015, but it was not possible to backdate figures in a consistent manner prior to 2015 due to changes in the question structure and reporting that were introduced from April 2015 through Q100. The majority of local authorities are reporting this information as fully as they are able to.

This methodological change for IBA metal has been applied to the 'waste from households' measure only. It has been applied to data from April 2015—it is not possible to apply the change to data before then as the question structure used to report waste treatment was different and, therefore, the reporting of IBA metal was not as consistent or as complete. At an overall England level, this change in methodology raised the recycling rate for 2016 by 0.7 percentage points (equivalent to 143 thousand tonnes). For 2015, the 'waste from households' recycling rate was increased by 0.4 percentage points (equivalent to 97 thousand tonnes). This is a slight underestimate for the impact on 2015 as data for January to March 2015 was collected using the old question structure and, as such, did not fully-capture IBA metal for this quarter; estimated to be around 23 thousand tonnes. Overall, this change in methodology results in 'waste from household' recycling rates being slightly higher than where IBA metal would previously have been reported as 'recovery'.

There are no such methodological changes to the dataset for all local authority waste or 'household waste' recycling. There are no changes to the household (NI 192) household recycling figures that are reported for England, nor at a regional and individual local authority level where existing methodology and definitions have been retained.

7.7 Question Structure for Treatment and Disposal Questions (Q100)

"Question 100" (Q100) was introduced on a voluntary basis from April 2014, and used by all local authorities in England from April 2015. This question replaced a number of treatment questions.

Q100 provides a more flexible structure that has enabled local authorities to report a more complete and transparent representation of the more complex waste treatment practices that occur, which could not be accurately captured under the old question structure. It also provides the opportunity for local authorities to report, in more detail, the further treatment and disposal of certain waste types such as refuse-derived fuel (RSF), which would have previously been a final output. This is highly specific to the local authority and the facilities and practices used for treatment and disposal.

7.8 Data Quality Assurance

All local authorities provide data into WasteDataFlow. Several stages of data validation are carried out by the local authority submitting the data, the WasteDataFlow contractor and Defra, with input from the Environment Agency.

The WasteDataFlow contractors check each return for completeness and data consistency against key standardised validation checks. Data is checked against appropriate threshold values specified, which take into account the expected level of variance. There is an online validation process that compares the data for the current quarter against the data for the equivalent quarter in the previous year. For 2020/21 validation check thresholds were adjusted to take account of the COVID-19 pandemic, this was to try and reduce the number of queries raised with local authorities, so that they were not overwhelmed by validation queries as tonnages of different waste streams changed dramatically due to suspended waste collections, increased waste arisings at the kerbside, and large reductions in C&I waste streams.

Once the data has been validated by the contractor, further validation checks are carried out by Defra, who may also refer some to the Environment Agency on any specific data queries raised, particularly related to the appropriate recording of treatment and facility sites. The Defra checks include trend and outlier analysis on key measures at an aggregate and individual local authority level. Details of the validation process carried out by the contractor are available on the WasteDataFlow website.

The introduction of Q100 provided scope for local authorities to report more fully on the treatment and final destination of waste. This is particularly the case for incineration of waste and subsequent outputs and their final treatment and disposal. Gathering such information can be challenging, especially where waste goes through multiple different sorting and treatment processes at different facilities. In most cases, local authorities are able to supply this information, but in some cases full final destination treatment is not given or is stated as 'unknown'. This may have a small impact on the final figures. Defra will continue to monitor this and work with local authorities to enhance data quality assurance, consistency, and completeness of reporting.

7.9 England recycling target

The Waste (Circular Economy) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 require Waste Management Plans to include measures to be taken to ensure that the preparing for reuse and the recycling of municipal waste is a minimum of 65% by weight by 2035 and to ensure the amount of municipal waste landfilled is reduced to 10% or less of the total amount of municipal waste generated (by weight) by 2035.

7.10 National Statistics Accreditation

National Statistics status means that our statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

In 2020 these local authority waste & recycling statistics together with those published by the devolved administrations in Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland underwent a compliance review by the "Office for stats regulation" (OSR), who monitor government statistical quality.

National statistics accreditation for these statistics was maintained at this review. The OSR made a number of [recommendations](#) around the statistics and publications.

Since the review Defra has made progress in meeting the recommendations highlighted in the report. These are:-

- Publication of a [recycling explainer document](#), giving background to recycling, the different local authority measures published and how they compare across the UK.
- Improvements have been made to the layout of the waste statistics landing pages.
- User feedback on academic use of these statistics has been sought from Defra Waste & recycling working group.
- Feedback on this Statistical notice and datasets is being gathered by a linked google forms questionnaire (opens a link to google forms).

Work on remaining points made by the OSR will continue in 2022.

8 Glossary of Terms and Measures

‘Waste from Households’

The ‘waste from households’ measure was introduced to statistical publications by Defra in May 2014. It is used to construct a harmonised UK indicator for reporting recycling rates at a UK level on a calendar year basis, providing comparable calculations across each of the four UK countries. ‘Waste from households’ is a narrower version of the **‘household waste’** measure that was used previously. The difference is that ‘waste from households’ excludes local authority collected waste types not considered to have come directly from households, such as street bins, street sweepings, parks and grounds waste, and compost-like output (CLO) from Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) plants. As explained above under ‘Methodology’ and ‘Data Notes and Development’, we have introduced a change to the ‘waste from households’ recycling calculation to now include metal recovered after incineration (IBA metal). For further information on the calculations and differences between measures has been published on the gov.uk website and is summarised in the table below.

| Recycling (including composting and reuse) | Waste from Households recycling | Household waste recycling |
|--|--|----------------------------------|
| <i>from households and other premises similar to households, CA sites, Bring banks</i> | Y | Y |
| <i>from street bins</i> | N | Y |
| <i>from household-related parks and grounds</i> | Community skips only | Y |
| <i>from soil</i> | N | Y |
| <i>from rubble and plasterboard</i> | N | N |
| <i>from compost-like output from MBT plant</i> | N | Y |
| <i>from incineration bottom ash (IBA)</i> | N | N |
| <i>From metal recovered and recycled from incinerator bottom ash</i> | Y* | N |
| <i>other, from residual streams</i> | Y | Y |
| <i>recycling rejects</i> | N | N |

| Residual waste | Waste from households residual | Household waste residual |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>from regular household collection</i> | Y | Y |
| <i>from civic amenity sites</i> | Y | Y |
| <i>from bulky waste</i> | Y | Y |
| <i>from other household waste</i> | Y | Y |
| <i>from street cleaning/sweeping</i> | N | Y |
| <i>from gully emptying</i> | N | Y |
| <i>from separately collected healthcare waste</i> | N | Y |
| <i>from asbestos waste</i> | N | Y |

Notes

* Revised to include IBA metal in 2017 and applied to data from April 2015.

We have continued to report the 'household waste' recycling measure in our annual publication on a financial year basis to maintain continuity with the existing data series and in order to meet the wider needs of users. However it is no longer reported in the quarterly releases on recycling, which will report the 'waste from households' measure only. Full data on 'household waste' is available and can be downloaded on the gov.uk website.

The local authority recycling rate is based on the **NI 192 National Indicator** recycling calculation. The National Indicator calculation has been widely used by local authorities for many years for local strategic planning purposes, discussions with contractors and for benchmarking against other authorities and captures a broader scope of household waste than 'waste from households', e.g. it includes street sweepings and compost like output. This calculation will be made available as the NI 192 report on the WasteDataFlow [portal](#)

and also on gov.uk [website](#). This is reported on a financial year basis to meet the needs of local authorities.

9 Recycling rates across the United Kingdom

As detailed above the 'Waste from households' recycling rate provides a consistent measure across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and allows reporting at UK level. However it should be noted that other National measures for Household recycling or recycling of all local authority collected waste differ across the devolved administrations. A [document](#) detailing these differences can be found here.

Useful links

[Scottish Government Statistics](#)

[Welsh Government Statistics](#)

[Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Statistics](#)

[Eurostat](#)

[WasteDataFlow Portal](#)

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